DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 134 499 SO 009 732

TITLE	Children's Impressions of American Indians: A Survey of Suburban Kindergarten and Fifth Grade Children.
INSTITUTION	League of Women Voters, New Brighton, Minn.
PUB DATE	Sep 75
NOTE	50p.; For a related document, see SO 009 733 ; Some pages may be marginally legible due to print quality of the original
AVAILABLE FROM	League of Women Voters, 1359 North Pike Lake Court, New Brighton, Minnesota 55112 ($1.50 paper cover)
EDRS PRICE	MF-$0.83 Plus Postage. HC Not Available from EDRS.
DESCRIPTORS	American Indian Culture; *American Indians; *Cultural Images; Data Analysis; Data Collection; Elementary Education; *Ethnic Stereotypes; Grade 5; Kindergarten; *Knowledge Level; Question Answer Interviews; Social Studies; *Student Attitudes; Suburban Youth; *Surveys; Tables (Data); United States History

ABSTRACT

Elementary school children in Mounds View, Minnesota, were surveyed for their impressions of American Indians. The method used was to individually interview every fifth child on the kindergarten and grade 5 class rosters. The report is presented in two sections--data and conclusions. Each of 12 questions is considered separately in the data section, with the answers of the 238 kindergartners and 239 fifth graders appearing side by side on a chart for purposes of comparison. Sample questions include: Do you know who American Indians are? Have you ever seen an American Indian? What do Indian children do? A discussion follows each question, in which both unusual and frequently mentioned comments from each grade are presented. In the conclusion section, grade responses are considered together. Among conclusions offered are that most children view Indian people as far removed from their way of life; many children view Indian people as warlike; most children do not recognize diversity among Indian people; and children's images suggest media influence. Six limitations of the study are identified, including the suburban nature of the sample, the use of 20 interviewers, and differences in verbal abilities of children. A bibliography and a list of instructions to interviewers are included. (Author/DB)

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CHILDREN'S IMPRESSIONS OF AMERICAN INDIANS

A Survey of Suburban Kindergarten and Fifth Grade Children

SO 009 732

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

LEAGUE OF WOMEN VOTERS
NEW BRIGHTON, MINNESOTA

September, 1975

HUMAN RESOURCES COMMITTEE

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

We wish to thank the following people and organizations for their cooperation. Without them, this study would not have been possible.

Dr. Roy F. Meyer and teachers and principals of Mounds View School District; American Indian Studies Department, University of Minnesota; Indian Parents Committee, Mounds View School District; Lee and Sue Antell; Merlynn Bergen; Dr. John Comstock; Janet Moore; Members of the New Brighton League of Women Voters: Sue Ashland, Jan Bensing, Marilyn Berg, Janet Comer, Mari Donaldson, Bea Fossum, Lorraine Fredrickson, Phyllis Gilbert, Char Hardt, Judy Hove, Gayle Knight, Jan Linner, Sandy Merino, Carol Mulder, JoAnn Nelson, Judy Nelson, Dorri Olson, Carol Pederson, and Jan Pettit.

A special thanks to Dana Brandt for her assistance and to Kit Janik whose ideas were the basis for this study.

INTRODUCTION

This study is presented by the Human Resources Committee of the League of Women Voters of New Brighton, Minnesota. It evolved from a special emphasis on American Indians prompted by the human resources position of the National League of Women Voters which states: "Support of equal rights for all regardless of race or sex, with recognition of the special needs of American Indians; action to combat poverty and discrimination and to provide equal access to employment, housing, and quality education."

As we became better informed, we were increasingly aware of the prevailing attitudes about Indian people. Our thinking, we realized, was encumbered with many stereotypes and a great amount of misinformation as well as ignorance. We wondered if the errors of our own thinking are present in the children of our community.

A member of our committee made a small pilot study in three classrooms on the information and attitudes of the children toward American Indians. The findings led us to believe that further study was warranted, and that it should be done on a district-wide basis, using a scientific sampling of children.

Mounds View School District, comprised of St. Paul suburbs, has, by sight count, 155 Indian children. Considering this number of Indian children, the attitudes and information of the other children take on added significance. We hoped the results of this survey could give helpful direction to teachers to know what the emphases should be in their teaching about Indian people.

SAMPLING

After consulting with people in the area of education and testing, a selective sampling was decided upon which would include one-fifth of all the children in kindergarten and fifth grade. Kindergarteners were chosen because their answers would help to show the kinds of knowledge and attitudes children have when they enter school. Fifth grade was chosen as a representative elementary grade since by then the children would have had some teaching about Indian people. The individual children were selected by taking every fifth child on the class roster, excluding children who were absent on the day of testing and known Indian children, as identified by the teachers. Therefore, children from every kindergarten and fifth grade classroom in the Mounds View School District were surveyed, a total of 238 kindergarteners and 239 fifth graders.

QUESTIONS

Questions were developed by this committee and were those used in the original pilot study except for minor modifications. Before use, they were submitted to the Indian Parents Committee of this school district as well as to other members of the Indian community, and some suggested changes were made. The questions were chosen according to the following criteria:

1. they must be easily understood by the elementary school child,
2. they must be worded not to lead the child,
3. they must be designed to bring out both attitudes and information.

METHOD

Individual oral interviews were conducted by League members who had attended an orientation workshop given by the committee. When briefing these interviewers on the mechanics of the interview, special effort was made to provide guidelines so that all interviews would be conducted in as uniform a manner as possible. (Note: These instructions are included in the appendix.)

It was decided to have the dates of interviewing as close to the beginning of the school year as possible. Thus, the study would not be influenced by teaching done in kindergarten and fifth graders would not be relying on learning achieved in their present classes. Because much teaching about Indians takes place at the time of Thanksgiving in conjunction with study of the arrival of the Pilgrims in America, the interviewing was to be completed by November. Two schools, however, were interviewed during November. As a result, a few kindergarteners from these schools revealed more detail in their answers.

Categorizing of the data was done with extreme care by this committee to ensure a high degree of objectivity. An attempt was made to deal with exactly what the response stated, without speculation about its meaning or what was not said. Each response was reviewed by the committee who agreed on the categorization. Both information and attitudes were noted and grouped. When the answers were too lengthy to use direct quotes, careful paraphrasing was done. Responses which expressed nearly identical ideas were counted as the same. No comparisons between schools were made.

LIMITATIONS

1. This sample is entirely suburban and results cannot be generalized to other population groups.
2. Although every effort was made to have interviews as uniform as possible, the use of 20 different interviewers could have caused some variability.
3. Some of the children in two schools were interviewed in November and Thanksgiving units may have influenced some kindergarteners.
4. The general nature of the questions brought out a wide variety of responses which made categorizing more difficult.
5. Some children may have been more at ease verbally than others.
6. This survey measures impressions children have of Indian people and not a child's total knowledge about them.

ORGANIZATION OF THE REPORT

This report has two main sections: the data and the conclusions. In presenting the data each question is considered separately beginning with a chart which gives basic statistics. To enable comparison, kindergarten and fifth grade answers appear side by side. Because some responses contained a combination of items, a frequency of response table of items significant to the particular question may be given beneath the chart to show the number of times individual items were mentioned. In the discussion which follows, the responses of each grade are considered separately. No quotation marks are used in the illustrations because some of the children's statements are paraphrased. Finally, in the conclusions, kindergarten and fifth grades are considered together. The committee puts forth conclusions based on the results of this study.

QUESTION NO. 1: Do you know who American Indians are?

Category	Kindergarten		Fifth Grade	
	Number Responding	Percent	Number Responding	Percent
"No"	190	80%	76	32%
"Yes" *	48	20%	163	68%
Total	238	100%	239	100%

*Categories of comments made with "yes" response

	Number of Responses	
	Kindergarten	Fifth Grade
Indians of the past described	7	47
"Indians who live in America"	4	15
Tribes named	0	14
People	5	9
Present day information	2	9
Positive comments without information	2	1
Hostile activities described	3	1
India Indians described	1	0
Unclassified	1	9
Total	25	105

Kindergarten:

- Out of 238 kindergarten children interviewed, 190 (80%) said they did not know who American Indians are. Forty-eight children (20%) answered "yes" and 25 of them added a comment to their answer. Some examples of their comments are:

They're big and they start fires in the corner when it's dark. (1)
They live in teepees. (1)
Red people. (1)
My Dad used to be an Indian. (2)
I met Ronnie Little Eagle when we were camping. (1)
For killing people. (1)
They're Indians who are nice. (1)

QUESTION NO. 1 (continued)

Fifth Grade:

Only 76 fifth graders (32%), as compared with 190 kindergarteners (80%) responded "no" to this question. Of the 163 students who responded "yes", 105 gave additional information. Almost half (47) of them gave answers dealing with historical origins, habitats, and customs of Indians. None of these students gave any mention that Indians also live today. Examples of the comments are:

They came from Asia. (8)
People who lived here before the settlers and Pilgrims. (13)
People who lived long ago. (3)
They came from caves. (1)
Fought against cowboys - mothers called "squaws". (1)
Brave men earn feathers. (1)
Yeah - like Sitting Bull and Crazy Horse. (1)
They were more civilized between tribes than between Blacks and Whites now. (1)
We bought their land and sometimes treated them unfairly. (1)

Fourteen students named the following tribes without giving any additional information: Sioux (5), Chippewa (4), Navajoes (3), Apache (3), Pueblo (3), and Cherokee (1).

A variety of phrases was used by 9 fifth graders to call Indians "people" as follows:

People (2)
Different kind of people (1)
They're just regular American people (2)
Like people except they have darker skin (3)
People just like us, some talk differently, have a red skin. (1)

Nine other children gave comments giving more specific information about Indians today and three of them seemed to indicate a positive feeling about Indians. Examples of these comments are:

They turned into Americans rather than keeping their own ways. (1)
They used to be a tribe and now are accepted in America. (1)
People who lived a long time ago and some live now. (1)
They're people who don't want to fight and mean peace. (1)
People like us, may live in different tribes - some live like we do - some are nice. (1)
Yes - like Russell Means and another guy at Wounded Knee - they were trying to take over part of the country because people weren't giving them their rights and they should. (1)

QUESTION NO. 1 - Fifth Grade (continued)

There were another 15 fifth graders who made the response "Indians who live in America." It is possible that they, too, were referring to Indians living today, but the comment could also be interpreted to be a restatement of the question.

One student expressed a positive feeling without giving additional information saying "Neat - kind of", while another described hostile activities of Indians now and in the past by saying "They used to make war and still do."

The unclassified information category included three comments:

Different countries have different kinds of Indians. (1)
They're just some Indians, not like the Cherokees. (1)
Just Indians. (7)

QUESTION NO. 2: Have you ever seen an American Indian?

Category	Kindergarten		Fifth Grade	
	Number Responding	Percent	Number Responding	Percent
No	139	59%	102	43%
No, with qualifying statement	8	3%	0	0%
Yes	47	20%	86	36%
Yes, saw one in person	16	6%	31	13%
Yes, representation *	21	9%	17	7%
Yes, hostile activity described	1	**	0	0%
Yes, unclassifed	1	**	2	1%
No response	5	2%	1	**
Total	238	100%	239	100%

* T.V., movies, books, pictures, slides, paintings, posters, dolls, statues

** Less than 1%

Kindergarten:

A majority (62%) of the kindergarteners said they had not seen an American Indian. Eight of these children explained their responses:

I don't know because I don't know what they look like. (1)
Because I never go to the woods. (1)
I have never been out West. (1)
No, not yet. (1)
Cause I don't go there. (1)
No, they're not real. (1)
Because my Mom never goes there but she went to Indianapolis. (1)
Because we live in North Oaks. (1)

NOTE: Figures given may not add up to 100% due to rounding of fractions of percentages.

QUESTION NO. 2 - Kindergarten (continued)

Of the 86 children who reported having seen an American Indian, 21 indicated this had been a representation of some kind. Sixteen of these 21 mentioned T.V. Another 16 of these children said they had seen an American Indian in person, and many described the place or event. For example:

I saw real Indians. (1)
Where I got my moccasins (1)
When we were camping. (1)
In North Dakota - I got to hold an Indian baby. (1)
At the State Fair, singing (1)
In Mrs. Foster's room (1)

Fifth Grade:

Slightly more than half the fifth grade students (56%) responded affirmatively to this question. Forty-seven explained their answers by describing where they had seen an Indian. For example:

Specific places:	World's Fair (1)
	at Black Hills (1)
	at Wisconsin Dells (1)
	saw a chief on the Mississippi
	In South Dakota, with a dog and transistor radio, dressed in leather suit and wearing feathers (1)
In general:	in stores (2)
	on the road (1)
	once on a Boy Scout picnic (1)
	my friend has an adopted Indian brother (1)
	On an airplane one sat in back of me. (1)

Two fifth graders were uncertain as to whether the person they had seen was an American Indian. Seventeen mentioned having seen a representation of an Indian (picture, statue, T.V., etc.) rather than having seen one in person. One student indicated having seen Russell Means and Dennis Banks on television.

QUESTION NO. 3: Describe an American Indian

Category	Kindergarten		Fifth Grade	
	Number Responding	Percent	Number Responding	Percent
Traditional Clothing and Customs *	78	33%	97	41%
Skin and/or hair color	8	3%	30	13%
People like us	3	1%	15	6%
Present day references implied	1	**	35	14%
Hostile activities described	6	3%	0	0%
Limited information (i.e. real Indian, American Indian)	17	7%	0	0%
Unclassified information	0	0%	5	2%
India Indians described	1	**	2	1%
No information	124	52%	55	23%
Total	238	100%	239	100%

** Less than 1%

* Frequency of response: Traditional clothing and customs

Feathers (68)
Weapons [arrows, etc.] (8)
Makeup or paint on face (8)
Indian suit (8)
Moccasins (5)
Skin or leather clothing (5)
Drum (3)
Indian hat (3)
Little clothing (2)
Necklace and jewelry (2)
Braids (2)
Dress different (2)
Teepees (2)
Warpaint (1)

Feathers (35)
Skin or leather clothing (25)
Moccasins (15)
Long hair (10)
Paint on face (10)
Beads (9)
Braids (7)
Dress different (5)
Talk different (5)
Weapons [arrows, etc.] (4)
Warpaint (4)
Little clothing (4)
Buffalo (4)
Necklace and jewelry (2)

NOTE: Figures given may not add up to 100% due to rounding of fractions of percentages.

QUESTION NO. 3 (continued)

Kindergarten:

Over one-half (52%) of the kindergarten students interviewed gave no response or said "I don't know" when asked to describe an American Indian. The largest number of children who responded described traditional clothing and customs. They did not distinguish between Indians living now and Indians living in the past. The frequency with which "feathers" was mentioned is interesting. Altogether 68 of the 78 responses mentioned "feathers." For 24 of these students, feathers was the only item mentioned. For example:

Feathers all around his head (7)
Feathers on top of his hat (10)
Feathers on his hat, arms, and legs (1)

The frequency of response chart indicates other items included in the traditional category. Examples of these answers are:

Feathers, skins made out of bears (1)
Red and black all over their face (1)
Feather hat, funny brown pants and shirt, shoes are black (1)
Feathers and Indian suit (1)
Indian hat and teepee to spend the night in (1)
Cowboys are shooting him. (1)

Eight students mentioned a variety of weapons: bows and arrows, knife, rifle, swords, spear. Not counted in the traditional category are six other students who described these hostile activities:

They have different things, kind of talk different. If they see people they throw swords at them. (2)
Mean (1)
They are like chief Indians and that means they are mean Indians. (1)
My dad almost got killed by one. Then he took all his bows and arrows and threw them all at once. (1)
Like killing people. (1)
Feathers, swords, knives, bows and arrows and have wars. (1)

Seven kindergarten students responded to this question by discussing skin color. There was no unanimity with respect to the color chosen, as black was the only one mentioned by more than one child.

black (3)
red (1)
brown (1)
Is he white (1)
Tan, white and peach (1)

QUESTION NO. 3 - Kindergarten (continued)

One student suggested an awareness of Indians today and an ability to distinguish between the present and the past by saying: "Kickapoo Indians don't shoot arrows anymore." Three kindergarteners described Indians as people:

A man (1)
It looks like a regular person (1)
Head, hair, arms, legs, fingers, toes, eyes, nose, mouth, ears, teeth (1)

Fifth Grade:

The largest percentage of fifth graders (41%) responded with descriptions of traditional clothing and customs. Responses were more detailed than those given by kindergarten students; feathers, hostile activities and weapons were less frequently mentioned. Two students described Indians with reference to a particular tribe. Except for six students who indicated they were speaking of the past, no time period was specified. Examples of some of the comments are:

He wears a lot of weird clothing, nothing on top, warpaint. (1)
They kill buffalo and wear leather. (1)
They wear a headdress and moccasins. (1)
They wear feathers and fur. (1)
They wear beads and ponytails. (1)
It's brown and it shoots animals. (1)
They fish and hunt, make beads of Indian corn, live in a house like a fort in the trees, may fight other Indians if they steal from them. (1)
They have black hair, some painted. I saw on TV and the movies. (1)
Good hunters - my great grandfather hunted with them. (1)

"Different" was a word used by 11 students to describe Indians. None of the students stated whether they meant Indians had been different from us in the past or were different from us today. Examples of these comments are:

Person like us, different language, acts different - wild-like. (1)
They talk different. Dark skin because they live in New Mexico. (1)
They dress different, live in different houses, darkish skin. (1)

Tribal diversity in the past was mentioned by two students:

Different tribes dressed differently - some painted for war. (1)
Depends on where they live. When Columbus came, they painted themselves. Some ate nuts for food. (1)

More fifth graders than kindergarteners described skin color in responding to this question. Dark or red skin was mentioned by 64 fifth graders compared to 7 kindergarten students. Responses mentioning only dark skin and/or dark hair were made by 30 students (13%). Six of these students qualified their answers by saying "usually."

QUESTION NO. 3 - Fifth Grade (continued)

Indians were described as people like us or like us with darker skin by 15 students. Two of these students said "They probably look like regular people."

References to present day life were implied by 35 students, an increase over the one kindergartener. Responses were varied, and some contained misconceptions. Some examples are:

They wear regular clothes now. (6)
Dressed like Americans - sort of dirty, similar houses but like log cabin (1)
They're like us but are poor. (4)
Their clothes are made of bearskin. There are a lot of them around where I live. (1)
They work in the U.S. The men wear pony tails and Indian clothing. (1)
Black hair, live in Minnesota, some live in birchbark tents or teepees. (1)
I don't know if they still wear feathers. (2)
Kind of nice - one lives by us - they smoke when they're young. (1)

Eleven of these 35 students indicated that some Indians today follow some traditional ways. Examples are:

They might wear same as old Indians today or might wear American clothes. (1)
Some wear braids and American clothes. (1)
Some wear clothes like us now - some still believe in ancient gods. Long ago wore leather clothes and feathers. (1)
Dress like us, sometimes speak in their language. (1)

Four fifth graders made specific comments expressing positive feelings towards Indians. Three called them "nice" and one said " I like them."

The unclassified category included five comments which didn't fit any particular category.

Black hair, long nose, round face, tall, brown skin, long arms, wide eyes (1)
Dark skin, black hair, strong (1)
Really creative (1)
They're skillful and polite (1)
Long hair, wool clothes, wool moccasins. They used bows and arrows at one time. (1)

QUESTION NO. 4: What does an Indian father do?

Category	Kindergarten		Fifth Grade	
	Number Responding	Percent	Number Responding	Percent
Traditional Activities:				
Hunting described	40	17%	102	43%
Other activities *	31	13%	15	6%
Hunting plus other activities *	2	1%	26	11%
Relation to cowboys	8	3%	0	0%
General activities:				
Parenting and work	39	17%	18	7%
Do nothing	1	**	2	1%
Hostile activities	17	7%	2	1%
Present day activities implied	2	1%	20	8%
No information	96	40%	54	23%
Unclassified	2	1%	0	0%
Total	238	100%	239	100%

** Less than 1%

* Frequency of response: other traditional activities

Kindergarten

Firewood and/or fire (14)
Dancing, drums (4)
Maple syrup (4)
Ride horses (3)
Protects family (3)
Agriculture (2)
Fishing (2)
Teepee or ten construction (2)
Chief (1)

Crafts:
- Handiwork (1)
- Moccasins (1)

Fifth Grade

Agriculture (10)
Chief (8)
Fishing (5)
Teepee or tent construction (4)
Medicine man (2)

Crafts:
- Carves wood (1)
- Moccasins (1)
- Bowls and spoons (1)
- Tools (1)
- Jewelry (2)
- Necklaces (1)

QUESTION NO. 4 (continued)

Kindergarten:

More than a third of the kindergarten children interviewed gave no information. The largest number (81) of those who did respond described Indian fathers in terms of traditional activities (i.e., those generally associated with the past). Hunting was most frequently mentioned, but other responses are listed on the table given for frequency of response. Kindergarteners described hunting in a variety of ways, for example:

Catches bears and deers (1)
Shoots turkey (1)
Kills: things (3), animals (7), food (1)
Shoots bow and arrow (4)
They find (catch) stuff to eat (2)

Another popular response (39) referred to general things parents do. These answers could apply to both Indians and non-Indians and, with just two exceptions, do not refer to any time period. (The exceptions were responses which mentioned the present-day occupations of doctor and policeman.) Examples of general parenting activities include:

Works (18)
Tells them what they are supposed to do (3)
Makes stuff (1)
Building things (1)
Helps the boys (3)

Hostile activities were mentioned by 25 pupils. In addition to the 17 comments listed as general hostile activities, eight children who mentioned traditional activities referred to hostile actions against cowboys. Sixteen of these responses mentioned killing.

Hostile activities in general:
Kills: people (7), men (1), someone (1), bad Indians (1)
The Indian comes to kill 'em (1)
Tries to kill people (1)
He fights (2)
Cuts people (1)
Catch people (1)
Sees some people and ties them up (1)

Activities against cowboys:
Shoots the cowboy (3)
He tells the Indians to get the cowboys (2)
Kills cowboys (1)
Waits for cowboys (1)
Finds cowboys (1)

QUESTION NO. 4 (continued)

Fifth Grade:

More than half of the fifth grade pupils gave answers describing traditional activities of the Indian of the past. Hunting was mentioned or described by 128 pupils, only four of whom indicated that this was something that had been done in the past. By comparison, the small number who mentioned fishing or agriculture is interesting, considering the importance that these activities hold in many tribes. Two children mentioned trading, and only three others specifically mentioned the diversity of activities among Indians, such as,

> Depending on the kind of Indian, some hunt, farm, fish, are warriors (1)
> Some Indians were agriculturists, some hunters, depending on the part of the country. (1)

There were more fifth graders (8) than kindergarteners (1) who talked about chiefs in response to this question. Confusion regarding the role of the chief was evident in many of these responses; children indicated that Indian fathers usually are chiefs, or that chiefs own the tribe, tell people to do things, trade, or teach children to read.

Relatively few fifth graders (18) gave answers describing general things parents do regardless of race or time. Among these responses are:

> Gets food for the family (3)
> Takes care of son and daughter (4)
> Works (6)
> Teaches right and wrong (1)

Although the question was asked in the present tense, only 20 children answered with language implying the present day. These responses describe the Indian as a member of today's heterogeneous American society, for example:

> Works like a regular person (5)
> Like a normal father (3)
> Tries to get food, buys clothes (1)
> Might work on a farm or something (1)
> Farming, construction work (1)
> Repairs cars, hunts (1)

The number of pupils describing hostile activities was considerably smaller than in the kindergarten survey. Two fifth graders mentioned fighting, and eight of those who gave traditional responses referred to war parties, warriors, controlling troops, or making weapons. Two comments are interesting because they seem to reflect some common prejudices toward today's Indian people:

> Sits around and loafs around; makes pots, jewelry and necklaces (1)
> Some work, some just sit around and don't do nothing (1)

QUESTION NO. 5: What does an Indian mother do?

Category	Kindergarten		Fifth Grade	
	Number Responding	Percent	Number Responding	Percent
General parenting & House-keeping	118	50%	94	39%
Traditional activities *	20	8%	101	43%
Present day activities implied	23	10%	22	9%
Hostile activities (kills people)	3	1%	0	0%
Unclassified	5	2%	1	**
No information	69	29%	21	9%
Total	238	100%	239	100%

** Less than 1%

* Frequency of response: traditional activities

Kindergarten

Work related to teepee, hut or camp (5)
Makes food/clothing from animals (4)
Gets or chops wood (3)
Carries papoose (baby) on back (2)

Fifth Grade

Makes food/clothing from animals (32)
Work related to teepee, hut, camp (8)
Grinds corn (grain) (8)
Plants corn (crops) (6)
Carries papoose (baby) on back (3)
Fishing (3)
Gets or chops wood (2)
Makes maple syrup and candy (1)
Crafts:
- Weaving (12)
- Makes pots or pottery (8)
- Makes moccasins (shoes) (7)
- Makes beads (6)
- Makes rugs (2)
- Makes wool/wool clothes (2)
- Makes jewelry (1)
- Makes baskets (1)
- Carves out leather (1)

QUESTION NO. 5 (continued)

Kindergarten:

Half of the children (118) described general activities associated with being a mother. These responses were not specific with regard to past or present time, and they included such things as cooking (58), taking care of a baby (17), washing dishes (11), washing clothes (5), and cleaning (4).

The traditional image of the Indian of the past appeared in 20 responses. (On the companion question, "What does an Indian father do?", 81 of the kindergarten responses reflected this traditional image.) Answers in this group include:

Cleans the tent (1)
Kills bear, takes claws and makes necklaces (1)
Carries baby on her back (1)
Irons deer clothes (1)

Twenty-three children described activities common today and chose words to suggest that Indian mothers live today and function as others in our society.

Cleans house (6)
Works around the house (4)
Stays in the house (6)
Makes it into cookies just like we do (1)
Iron clothes (1)
Goes to work (2) (one added "and Saturday she stays in her house")
Cleans, makes beds, takes care of the children (1)
She's a nurse (1)
Cooks and tells you stories and takes you to the park (1)

Fifth Grade:

Many more fifth graders than kindergarteners (101 compared with 20 kindergarteners) described activities associated with Indian women in the past. As a group, fifth graders described a variety of women's activities; however, only 19 named more than one traditional activity. This variety is illustrated in the frequency of response section. Some examples are given here:

Makes and cooks food the father kills (or hunts) (5)
Skins animals and grinds grain (1)
Makes skins soft for clothes (1)
Dries meat for jerky (1)
Harvests, takes care of livestock (1)
Grows gardens, plants, digs up roots (1)
Hangs fish on rock (1), cleans fish (1), dries fish (1)
Weaves, mushes and plants corn, picks berries, makes moccasins (1)
Women own land and can fire the chief (1)

QUESTION NO. 5 - Fifth Grade (continued)

Only three children explicitly stated their understanding that an Indian mother does different things today than she did a long time ago. Four pupils indicated that all tribes are not the same by referring to a specific tribe or by indicating diversity among Indians, as follows:

> Cooks and takes care of babies. Iroquois women do planting of food. (1)
> The Pueblo built homes, make clothing and clean food (1)
> If they have crops, she tends them; teaches girls how to tan hides. (1)
> It depends on the tribe---take care of the house (1)

Another popular answer described general activities associated with the role of a mother which are not specific to any time period. Ninety-four pupils mentioned such things as general child care, cooking, teaching children how to cook, and sewing.

Twenty children speak of the mother as involved in today's society. A few underscore that concept by use of phrases such as "the same as us" or "wherever we go."

> Like a normal mother; does housework when children go to school. (1)
> Go shopping wherever we go (1)
> Might stay home or get a job outside the house (5)
> May have a job; be divorced; may cook (1)
> Teaches her daughter how to sew and cook just about the same as us (1)
> Keeps house (1)
> She cooks and now is like a regular mother; may work in a factory or stay home and see her children off to school (1)
> Mother does chores while kids are in school (1)
> I think about the same as we do (1)
> Prepares food, takes care of the children and sends them off to school (1)

None of the 239 pupils interviewed expressed negative feelings toward Indian mothers. Two children gave responses that convey stereotypes of poverty commonly held about today's Indian, suggesting that Indians do not have stoves, washers, or dryers.

QUESTION NO. 6: What do Indian children do?

Category	Kindergarten		Fifth Grade	
	Number Responding	Percent	Number Responding	Percent
General children's activities	144	61%	94	39%
Traditional activities (e.g., hunting)	32	13%	78	33%
Present day implied	6	3%	31	13%
Hostile activities	8	3%	0	0%
Combination past and present activities	0	0%	7	3%
No information	48	20%	29	12%
Total	238	100%	239	100%

Frequency of response:

Kindergarten

Hunting (4)
Chop wood (4)
Bows and arrows (3)
Dancing (3)
Go to school (3)
Fishing (2)
Make syrup (1)
Ride horse (1)

Fifth Grade

Hunting (39)
Go to school (24)
Bows and arrows (10)
Fight or play war games (8)
Ride horse (5)
Fishing (4)
Weaving (3)
Pick berries (2)
Make syrup (1)
Dancing (1)
Chop wood (1)
Chief (1)
Grind corn (1)
Plant food (1)
Make jewelry (1)
Make pottery (1)

QUESTION NO. 6 (continued)

Kindergarten:

The largest percentage of kindergarten responses (61%) was in the general children's activities category; that is, activities which children do regardless of time or place in history. In this category "play" was the most frequent reply (126). Additional responses concerned simply helping parents.

Activities conveying an image of Indian life at some previous point in history were described by 32 kindergarten children (13%). Six children mentioned hunting or shooting bows and arrows. The remainder (26) dealt with family life, dances, play and work activities generally associated with the past. Examples of some of the comments are:

Hunt (3)
Kill bear with bows and arrows (1)
Play in the woods with bows and arrows (2)
Do Indian dances (1)
Help father make syrup (1)
Help mommy protect (1)
Play in the woods (1)

Six of the students mentioned activities typical of present day life. These responses were as follows:

Go to school (3)
Play piano (1)
Play on playground (1)
Play, have cats and dogs (1)

It is interesting that eight kindergarteners mentioned hostile activities when describing what children do. Killing people was the most frequent response:

Kill men (1)
Kill people (1)
Shoot mean people (1)
Kill their father and all the kids (1)
When they're 12 they help kill people, my dad told me that (1)
Sometimes they hide and try to catch people (1)
Play like bad Indians (1)
Play and pretend things to grow up and kill people (1)

QUESTION NO. 6 (continued)

Fifth Grade:

The category of general children's activities was also the largest for fifth grade (94 responses). Forty-six students simply said "play" and the balance of the comments (48) were related to work, helping parents and making things.

When answering this question, one-third of the fifth graders (78) referred to Indian life in the past. Significantly, 60 of these comments were concerned with war, weapons or hunting, as compared to six of the kindergarteners. For example:

> Sometimes at certain age become warriors (1)
> Hunt, ride horses, shoot bow and arrow, girls weave (1)
> Boys hunt with father, girls pick berries (1)
> Tan hides, sews, hunts (1)
> Practice shooting and stake out sheep (1)
> Play, fight, don't have games like us (1)
> Most get together and shoot arrows and pretend to be hunters. (1)

The remainder (18) described work and play in the past, without mentioning hunting or fighting. The referred to such activities as grinding corn, carving, floating canoes and playing stickball.

The present day was implied in answers given by 31 fifth grade students as compared to six kindergarteners. The majority (24) of these responses were about going to school. Two of the children who referred to school attendance added negative comments "they like to fight a lot" and "get into trouble." Examples of other comments are:

> Play and go to school (14)
> Like us, people, if like around here go to school (1)
> Usually go to school, learn from parents, all Indians do what we do (1)

Both past and present day activities were suggested in the response of seven fifth graders. These comments were difficult to interpret and classify, for example:

> Go to school and learn to be a chief (1)
> Make arrows and go to school (1)
> Play and some go to school in some tribes (1)

QUESTION NO. 7: Where do Indian people live?

Category	Kindergarten		Fifth Grade	
	Number Responding	Percent	Number Responding	Percent
Dwelling types*				
Traditional (i.e. teepees, caves)	64	27%	35	15%
Contemporary (house, apartment)	26	11%	11	5%
Traditional and contemporary	0	0%	5	2%
Land types** (see next page)	42	17%	36	15%
Geographical area:				
Specific state or location	24	10%	50	21%
Unspecified city, village, town	2	1%	3	1%
Reservation	0	0%	42	17%
All over or anyplace	2	1%	24	10%
Far away	11	5%	0	0%
Lived here a long time ago	4	2%	0	0%
Unclassified (India, Africa, West Indies, castles, jungles)	17	7%	8	3%
No information	46	19%	25	11%
Total	238	100%	239	100%

*Frequency of dwelling types:

Kindergarten

tents (28)
teepees (27)
house/home (24)
Indian houses (4)
caves (3)
little house (1)
Log house in N. St. Paul (1)
grass things (1)
I don't know what it's called (1)

Fifth Grade

teepees (31)
house (22)
tents (3)
Indian camps (3)
wigwams (2)
birchbark huts (1)
mud house (1)
caves (1)
forts of grass (1)
old house in field (1)
old houses of rock (1)
Indian house (1)
straw huts (1)
dirt house (1)
trees (1)
lodges (1)
older houses (1)
pueblos (1)
brick houses (1)
stone house (1)
slums (1)
old towns (1)

QUESTION NO. 7 (continued)

**Frequency of land types:

Kindergarten	Fifth Grade
forests or woods (28)	desert (10)
country (6)	mountains, hills, cliffs (9)
desert (5)	plains/prairies (8)
mountains, hills, cliffs (4)	forest/woods (8)
outside (1)	hot climate (2)
wilderness (1)	in the country (2)
	low ground (1)
	farmland (1)
	Great Plains (1)
	land by rivers (1)
	up north or south (1)
	way out (1)
	where the good green grass is (1)
	where it's not too hot or too cold (1)
	where there is food and water (1)
	where there are lots of wild animals (1)

QUESTION NO. 7 (continued)

Kindergarten:

Most of the kindergarten students (58%) described housing or locales different from their own, that is, dwellings or locations unlike the suburban communities in which they live. Furthermore, their responses implied Indians of the past who lived off the land or occupied teepees, tents, etc.

Although 24 children mentioned specific states, not one mentioned Minnesota. Another 28 pupils gave answers indicating the present day by citing houses, towns, and cities. It is interesting that no kindergarteners mentioned reservations. Four students implied Indians are no longer living here:

They used to live here (1)
A long time ago in our state (1)
In the old days (2)

Fifth Grade:

Compared with those of the kindergarteners, the fifth grade responses to this question were more extensive, giving a wider range of living places.

Traditional dwelling types were named by 35 children (15%) to describe where Indian people live. It is noteworthy that 17 of these fifth graders responded with "teepee" alone. Eighteen others named a combination of traditional dwelling types such as "teepee and birchbark huts" (1), or "caves, forts of grass and trees". (1)

Sixteen children said Indians live in a house, home or apartment. Five of these also mentioned a traditional place indicating a variety:

Some live in America in regular houses, some in wigwams, and other kinds of Indian houses. (1)
One I saw lived in an apartment here, others live in the desert. (1)
Depends on what kind of Indian they are, some live in pueblos, some live in houses like ours. (1)
Some live in the desert, some live in U.S. in regular houses, on islands. (1)
Huts, teepees, houses like ours (1)

Thirty-six fifth graders (15%) responded to this question with only land area types. These are shown on the frequency of response chart. Of these 36, 25 named just one area such as mountains or prairies. None specified the time period.

QUESTION NO. 7 - Fifth Grade (continued)

In contrast to those 24 students who said Indians live anywhere or all over, 50 fifth graders named a specific state(s) or location. It is interesting that only 14 of these mentioned places in Minnesota and eight children named only South American or Canada. Three students associated a living area with a particular tribe: "Navajoes live in the Southwest" (1), "Sioux live in North Dakota" (1), "The Chippewa live by Duluth, Lake Superior, Lake Huron and they lived over on the Eastern coast and on the Mississippi River" (1). Some of the locations are:

Mille Lacs (1)
Here, Texas, Florida (1)
California and Nevada (1)
up north, northern part (1)
New Mexico, South Dakota, Mexico (1)
Colorado, Wyoming, wherever it is hot (1)
Washington and Oregon (1)

Eighteen children gave responses which reflect misconceptions about Indians. For example:

Mostly were other people don't live (1)
Now they live on government property (1)
Chippewas live on cliffs and make homes on cliffs (1)
They can live anywhere, they are not allowed in some countries (1)
They live anywhere, they travel far like us, but they walk. (1)

Reservations were mentioned by 42 children (17%). Nine indicated Indian people "now live on a reservation", 22 simply said "on a reservation" and three stated they live there in a teepee. Only 8 indicated Indian people also can live elsewhere:

Reservations and cities (2)
Some live on reservations (3)
Sometimes on reservations, plains or regular houses (1)
Might live on a reservation or regular house (1)
Reservation, woods, teepee, house (1)

One fifth grader mentioned hostile activities by saying "Some live in teepees and some break down people's houses and kill other people."

QUESTION NO. 8: How do you feel about American Indians?
QUESTION NO. 9: Why do you feel the way you do?

These two questions are classified and discussed as one because both the attitude and the reason for it were sometimes given in response to question number 8. Kindergarten and fifth grade responses are presented in separate charts. Each response is classified on the basis of two characteristics: (1) nature of attitude; that is, positive, negative, or non-committal, and (2) the nature of the reason; that is, stereotypic, realistic, or non-specific.*

Kingergarten:

Reason:	Attitude: Non-committal	Positive	Negative	Total
Non-specific	130 (55%)	54 (22%)	12 (5%)	196 (82%)
Stereotypic	4 (2%)	15 (6%)	11 (5%)	30 (13%)
Realistic	2 (1%)	10 (4%)	0 (0%)	12 (5%)
Total	136 (58%)	79 (32%)	23 (10%)	238 (100%)

Fifth Grade:

Reason:	Attitude: Non-committal	Positive	Negative	Total
Non-specific	91 (38%)	10 (4%)	0 (0%)	101 (42%)
Stereotypic	9 (4%)	32 (13%)	2 (1%)	43 (18%)
Realistic	23 (10%)	69 (29%)	0 (0%)	92 (39%)
Total Unclassified	123 (52%)	111 (46%)	2 (1%)	236 3 } (100%)

*Explanation of classifications of reasons:

Stereotypic: overgeneralizations based on one aspect of Indian life in the past or misconceptions about Indian life today.

Non-specific: comments containing little information

Realistic: comments which reflect some understanding of the variety among Indians or which indicate respect for Indian people.

The following discussion is divided into attitude categoires as shown on the chart. Within each of these categories the stereotypic, realistic, and non-specific reasons are discussed.

Kindergarten:

Non-Committal Attitude

Of the 238 kindgarten children interviewed, 34 (15%) did not respond to either question and 96 other students (40%) responded to both questions with "I don't know" or variations of this such as "That's a hard one" or "I forget." These responses were classified as non-specific.

Six other children simply gave information without expressing an attitude. Four of these were classified as stereotypic information. These children said Indians sleep in tents, chop on something, or have wars. Classified as realistic non-committal were two children who said:

We have seen American Indians when we go hunting. (1)
Nothing much. They're like Americans. (1)

Positive Attitude

A positive attitude was suggested by 79 children (32%). Of these, 54 felt good about Indians without giving a reason for their feelings, and were therefore classified as non-specific. They responded with answers such as "fine", "great", and "happy."

Fifteen students expressed positive feelings for Indians for reasons which suggest a stereotypic image of Indians. Some of the comments are:

Sad, because they might die. (1)
Indians and cowboys should share, should have a border and not fight - pretty soon all will be killed. (1)
If they get hurt or shot or die, I feel bad. (1)
I feel pretty good because American Indians are the best Indians in the whole world. Some cowboys are good too. (1)
They're nice I know, at least now. They wear Indian beads on their shoes. (1)
Good. They kill bad animals. (1)

Two children liked Indians but they portrayed a negative image:

I like 'em - they tie people up in cages. (1)
Fine, I like 'em better than hockey players because they can shoot bad guys who try to get them with their guns in the old days. (1)

Ten children (4%) gave realistic answers to explain their positive attitudes. Personal contact with Indians was mentioned by seven of these children. Examples are:

> Good, because they're good people. (1)
> Happy, I like Indians. They're nice to my mama and daddy. (1)
> Happy, 'cause it was the first time I met an Indian. My Dad said they liked little kids and people. (1)
> Happy. I go to their house. They live near me. (1)
> I feel good. I've seen one. They help each other. (1)

Negative Attitude

Negative feelings were expressed in comments given by 23 kindergarteners (10%). Twelve of these children gave non-specific reasons for their feelings, responding with comments such as "I don't like Indians", "Not very good", and "Ick." The other 11 children with negative attitudes had stereotypic reasons, 10 of whom specifically mentioned killing and shooting. Some of the comments are:

> If I saw one, I would run home. I don't want to get hurt. (1)
> I don't like them because they kill people. (1)
> After them put you in jail, that means they tie you up and shot you. (1)
> I know those Indians have spears - they kill people. (1)
> If they shoot me, I could get my brother's bow and arrow and shoot them. (1)

Fifth Grade:

Non-Committal Attitude

Like the kindergarteners (58%), over half of the fifth graders (52%) were non-committal as to their attitude about American Indians. Fifty-five of these children replied "I don't know" to both questions. Fifteen gave no response at all. The remaining 21 students reflected uncertainty giving a non-specific reason. They said they knew very little about Indians or had seen them only in books.

Of the children who were non-committal, 23 gave reasons classified as realistic, for example:

> I don't know. They should get some land back. (1)
> I don't know. They're just regular people. (1)
> I don't know. They should be able to do stuff like we do. (1)
> I don't have anything against them. They have the right to live like we do. (1)

Other children (9) gave reasons that were stereotypic in nature. Examples of comments are:

I'm not sure because they don't live the same as we do. (1)
I don't care. It would be rough living, they used to eat on prairies. (1)
I guess they're o.k. I like to hear about how they get food and make houses. (1)
I don't know. Now they're on reservations, should be set free - wouldn't have to start fights like Wounded Knee. (1)

Positive Attitude

A positive attitude was expressed by 111 fifth graders (46%). Ten students who expressed positive attitudes without further comment were classified as non-specific. They said such things as "They're nice", "Good", "I like them", or "They're o.k."

Realistic reasons were given by 69 children, 14 of whom told of personal contact with Indians. Some examples are:

They're neat. I've lived on an Indian reservation. (1)
They are fun to know and work with. It's fun to listen to what they do. (1)
They're nice - used to live next to me. (1)
I like them. I think they're nice people. My grandfather was part Indian. (1)

Strong feelings were expressed by 21 children who said Indians should have their rights as people and be able to keep their lands. Examples of these comments are:

They're God's people so they deserve their rights. (1)
They have a right to live like we because they are people. (1)
I feel sorry for them because they are not equal. (1)
They're o.k. Shouldn't take religious land away from them. (1)
Because they were here first, have as much right to the land as we do. (1)

Of the fifth graders with positive attitudes and realistic reasons, 15 said Indians are people like us. Eight others mentioned they are people like us but also noted differences. Examples of these comments are:

They're nice - people with different customs (1)
They're human like us, same rights, because different color doesn't mean anything (1)
They shouldn't be criticized because they are different, hard for them to get jobs in the city, must return to the reservation, government doesn't do much (1)
I like them - like us only in a tribe (1)

Contributions of the past were mentioned by seven children. The contribution most often mentioned was that Indians taught the Europeans how to plant corn. Four other students expressed a desire to know Indians personally or to learn more about them. Examples of these comments are:

I like them. They taught us how to grow crops and corn when the Pilgrims came. (1)
They're good, peaceful..wouldn't have corn if weren't for them. (1)
Good. They found most of the food and taught us how to grow corn. (1)
They're nice. I'd like to have some for friends. (1)
People should like them. They should be studied more. (1)

A number (32) of the fifth graders (13%) having positive attitudes gave responses classified as stereotypic. Some are overgeneralizations relating to the past, others are present day stereotypes such as Indians being required to stay on reservations. Examples of comments are:

They are kind even if they have bows and arrows. (1)
They're nice. They are good hunters, they get bearskins, don't hurt us or nothing. (1)
I think they're smart. They've lived in caves, we never have. (1)
They're nice. They shouldn't be penned up on a reservation. (1)
They should have more freedom, not be restricted to reservations - better housing, good to speak up at Wounded Knee. (1)
I feel sorry they don't get education and learn things. (1)

Negative Attitude

Only two fifth graders expressed negative attitudes about Indians as compared with 23 kindergarteners. They gave these reasons: "because they are so different" and "because they beat people up."

Question No. 10: Would you like to have an Indian for a friend?

Category	Kindergarten		Fifth Grade	
	Number Responding	Percent	Number Responding	Percent
Yes	166	70%	215	90%
No	59	25%	5	2%
Indifferent or unsure	13	5%	19	8%
Total	238	100%	239	100%

Kindergarten:

It is significant that one quarter of the kindergarten children stated that they did not wish to have an Indian for a friend.

Ten children added comments to their affirmative responses, and four of them mentioned some kind of personal contact with Indians.

One of my friends do, though. (1)
There is an Indian by us - Alex, he owns the building we live in. (1)
I've got one. (1)
I already have an Indian friend. (1)

The other six comments by children who said they wanted an Indian for a friend are as follows:

If I was an Indian. (1)
A real one; then if anybody beats me up, I'll get 'em. (1)
They can teach you how to shoot bows and arrows. (1)
I have an Indian action spear. (1)
So he can shoot arrows at people I didn't like. (1)
So he'll have to undo his teepee and bring it over. (1)

Two children added comments when they answered "no".

I have an Indian doll. (1)
I want a kitty to play with. (1)

QUESTION NO. 10 (continued)

Fifth Grade:

The overwhelming majority of the fifth graders (90%) stated that they would like to have an Indian for a friend. Forty children added comments to their affirmative answers. There were no comments added to negative answers.

Ten children stated that they already have an Indian friend. Nine others made positive statements such as "it might be fun" (3), "they seem nice, some of them" (1), and "I don't know why not" (1). Other children (7) indicated that it would depend on what the Indian was like. For example:

> It depends on how he acted or what his nature was. (1)
> It depends on if they're nice or mean. (1)
> It would depend on their personality and things in common; I don't think it would matter if they were Indian or not. (1)

Six children suggested that it would be a learning experience to have an Indian for a friend. For example:

> It would be fun playing with an Indian 'cause they could teach you a lot of things they do and make. (2)
> It would be nice to see what their style is different from ours. (1)
> Because you could probably learn about them. (1)

Another six children also felt they could learn from an Indian friend. However, their comments imply that they are thinking of the Indian of the past.

> I could probably learn things; he could tell about when his dad was small and if he was a chief. (1)
> He could teach me how to make spears and stuff. (1)
> They could teach you how to hunt and that. (1)
> If he could understand our language I would. (1)

Finally, two miscellaneous comments were made:

> Probably, if it was a pen pal or if it lived in my neighborhood. (1)
> They're just a different color; you shouldn't hate them; I think anybody should have an Indian for a friend. (1)

QUESTION NO. 11: What do American Indians do today?

Category	Kindergarten		Fifth Grade	
	Number Responding	Percent	Number Responding	Percent
They live like other people:				
Do what other people do	54	23%	109	46%
Are nice	4	2%	2	1%
Some live like we do, while other continue traditions	0	0%	13	5%
Live differently than other people:				
Make jewelry and blankets for tourists	0	0%	10	4%
Live on reservations	0	0%	17	7%
Fight for their rights	0	0%	5	2%
Don't do much	1		4	2%
Live in the old ways	37	16%	21	9%
Are hostile	10	4%	3	1%
Other:				
No information given	129	54%	49	21%
Unclassified*	3	1%	6	2%
Total	238	100%	239	100%

*Among those responses which were impossible to classify, were those of four pupils (one kindergartener and three fifth graders) who said there are few or no Indians left.

Kindergarten:

Slightly less than half of the kindergarten children (46%) gave an answer to this question. Of the 109 pupils who did respond, only one said that Indians no longer exist; fifty-nine either acknowledged them as contemporaries or gave general answers like: work (12), eat (2), sleep (4), help people (1). Answers suggesting that Indians live like other people include:

Work, wait for the bus (1)
Go to school, go with Mom to shop (1)
Dress like Americans (1)
Learn to read (1)

QUESTION NO. 11 - Kindergarten (continued)

Forty-seven children (19%) gave answers suggesting that Indians still live as they did before Europeans came to America. Some examples are:

I think they kill turkeys. (1)
Go hunting (9)
Chop down trees (2)
Stay in teepees (1)
Shoot arrows (2)

Of these 47 children, 10 described hostile activities. They referred to such things as killing, chopping off heads, and stealing horses.

Fifth Grade:

It is significant to note that 21% of the fifth graders replied "I don't know" when asked what Indians do today. -An additional 10% either stated that Indians still live in the old ways or implied this by citing such traditional activities as hunting, grinding food, building fires, planting corn and squash. In addition, three children (1%) said that there are few or none left.

The remaining 66% of the fifth graders gave responses suggesting some awareness of Indians as part of the present day society. However, some of these responses (35) were very general in nature. Among other things they said:

They live the same as we do. (17)
I suppose they do what most people do. (9)
They act like normal people. (3)

Work and jobs were cited by 56 children. Specific occupations mentioned were: teacher (1), engineer (1), and farmer (1). Others said Indians: build things (1), make murals (1), work in stores (2), work in factories (2), work for lumber companies (1). Urban living is implicit in the answers of the children who said: they live in cities (2), they live in apartments (1), work in factories (2), and work in stores (2).

Six pupils who said that Indians live like other people pointed out that this was a change from the past. Another 13 suggested that while most Indians live like we do, there are those who continue some of their traditions. Some examples are:

They don't make war like they used to. We're teaching them about computers and they're teaching us about land. (1)
Live on reservations. They are getting used to new techniques that have come in and don't go on hunts anymore. (1)
Some earn a living, some stay on the reservation because they want to keep their traditions. (1)
Some get good jobs, some choose to live on the reservation and go on as they did before. (1)

QUESTION NO. 11 (continued)

Fifth Grade:

Reservations were mentioned by 22 children (17 as shown on the chart plus five included in other categories). Two of these children indicated that Indians are confined to reservations without choice. Comments included:

> They have to stay in a special place but I don't know what they do there. (1)
> Live on a reservation and do what they did years ago. (3)
> Indian children go to school, get jobs, have their own Indian place. You have to get a license if you want to hunt and fish there. (1)
> Live on reservations. Some live in houses and work, some have jobs. They are poor; don't have a chance to get a good education. (1)

Included in various categories were five different references to "Wounded Knee." In addition, four children described the contemporary struggle of the American Indian. They said Indians are fighting to get back their land and fighting for their rights in the government.

In contrast to the 10 kindergarten children, only three fifth graders mentioned hostile activities. Two children said "they fight", and one said "most are mean". Negative attitudes appeared instead in the six inferences that Indians today are lazy and/or get handouts:

> They don't do much today--they sit around--we have these tribes, we give them stuff. (1)
> Well, they usually are working or staying on the reservation or else just sitting around on the reservation or breaking into stores. (1)
> Live on a reservation and get money from the government. (1)
> Work, government has given them homes by us--wear American clothes and go to school. (1)
> They don't do as much as they used to. (1)
> Sit around (1)

Positive attitudes were expressed or implied by seven pupils. Some examples are:

> Have cars like we do, work as hard to make a living, they should have any job they want and that's good to let them do the things they want to do. (1)
> Live the same as we do, their lives are harder because of prejudice. (1)
> Try to make a living like anyone else only they can't get as good jobs. (1)

QUESTION NO. 12: Can you name the Indian tribes living in Minnesota?

Fifth Grade:

Category	Number Responding	Percent
No	179	75%
Indian tribes living in Minnesota Chippewa (16) Sioux (11) Chippewa and Sioux (11)	38	16%
Sioux and/or Chippewa and tribes not living in Minnesota	11	5%
Indian tribe(s) not living in Minnesota	6	3%
Nonexistent Indian tribes	5	2%
Total	239	100%

The overwhelming majority of the fifth graders (75%) could not answer this question. Of those who responded with tribal names (60), 49 mentioned Sioux and/or Chippewa. Only 17 of these children named both Sioux and Chippewa while the remainder named only one of these tribes. Some of these also added names of tribes not living in Minnesota.

The following chart shows the number of time other tribal names were mentioned.

Indian tribes not in Minnesota		Nonexistent Indian Tribes	
Cherokee	11	Weebelo	2
Apache	6	Redskins	2
Navajo	5	Token-Tank	1
Crow	2		
Inca	2		
Pueblo	1		
Cheyenne	1		
Blackfeet	1		
Shoshone	1		
Kiowa	1		
Iroquois	1		

Most children view Indian people as far removed from their own way of life.

A careful analysis of all responses makes one conclusion very clear; most of the children surveyed view the American Indian as far removed from their way of life. When asked if they had ever seen an American Indian, only 16 kindergarteners (6%) and 31 fifth graders (13%) indicated they had seen one in person. This is interesting considering the number of Indian people living in the Twin City metropolitan area. Perhaps even more interesting are the comments of those who went on to state where they had seen an American Indian; almost everyone described places or situations outside his home, neighborhood, school, and circle of friends. For these children, the American Indian seems to exist "somewhere else" - the Black Hills, in North Dakota, at the fair, etc.

A number of other factors reinforce this conclusion: the many children who were unable to offer any description whatsoever of an American Indian, and the consistent recurrence of references to Indians of long ago in response to questions about Indian fathers, mothers, and children. When children were asked where Indian people live, they very clearly placed them "someplace else" - in dwellings very different from their own, such as tents and caves, in other states, in other time periods. For the most part, even those who placed Indians in another time period (by describing customs and practices of the past) also located them away from here. For example, little reference was made to the fishing, wild ricing, and maple sugaring so important to Indians in northern Minnesota. As a group, the children saw Indian people as far removed from themselves in location and in time.

Many children hold an historic/traditional image of Indian people.

Indians wearing traditional clothing and engaged in traditional activities were described by many children in kindergarten and fifth grade. Although few (no kindergarteners and 11 fifth graders) indicated they were speaking of the past, it is apparent that many of these students were describing the Indian in history. For example, children frequently mentioned skin clothing and feathers when describing Indians; they identified hunting as an Indian father's work and pictured mothers making clothes and food from the animals; they depicted children learning to hunt and shoot. This historical image was most evident in regard to an Indian father's work where 69% of the kindergarteners and 77% of the fifth graders who gave information mentioned traditional activities only. Furthermore, when asked specifically about today (question #11), 43% of the kindergarteners and 16% of the fifth graders who gave information mentioned the same traditional activities or stated Indians live the same as they always did. For these students, the historic/traditional image dominates.

Many children, particularly kindergarteners, view Indian people as warlike and hostile.

A distorted image of Indians as war-like has prevailed throughout much of American history. Indinas defending their land against encroachment by European settlers have been termed "bloodthirsty savages" and their victories "massacres." Pictures showing Indians attacking so-called "innocent settlers" have been all too common.

In view of this, therefore, some comments reflecting this war-like image could have been anticipated. Yet we were surprised at the relatively large number of kindergarten children who described Indians as mean or killing or shooting people. This type of comment occurred in response to every question except number 7 (where do Indian people live?). Comments ranged from simply "kill people" to "After them puts you in jail, that means they tie you up and shot you." The largest number occurred in relation to the father's activities, but even an Indian mother's activities were described as "kills people and goes to work." Even more startling were the eight kindergarteners who described Indian children shooting, catching, or killing people. Altogether almost one-fifth of the kindergarteners mentioned some type of hostile activity.

By contrast, only on fifth grader described this type of overt hostility. Other students implied a war-like image by speaking of Indian fathers going on war parties, children having game wars or Indians acting "wild-like." The total number of students who made these types of comments numbered 25, a decrease from the 43 kindergarteners, indicating a possible improvement in the image held by fifth graders.

Most of the children do not recognize the great diversity among Indian people which existed in the past and continues today.

Gerald Vizenor, in his book The Everlasting Sky: New Voices From the People Named the Chippewa speaks of an image of the Indian which is "homogenized" from more than 300 distinct tribal cultures, an image he feels the white dominant society prefers over the complexities of true Indian history. Many kindergarteners depicted this homogenized image by describing Indians wearing feathers, hunting, and living in teepees or tents in the woods. This simplistic overgeneralized view of Indian people has apparently been formed before kindergarteners enter school.

Because the majority of fifth graders did not specify whether they were speaking of one tribe or all Indians, they also seem to present a generalized view of Indians in the past. It is possible that they know from their studies in school that there were differences among tribes, but this was not expressed in their comments. For example, does the student who mentioned Indian mothers cleaning buffalo skins realize not all Indian tribes hunted buffalo?

Only a few fifth graders (16) indicated an understanding of tribal differences in the past. Some used tribal names in association with their information ("The Pueblo built homes, make clothing and clean food."). Others qualified their responses by saying "it depends" or "some." Only six students more explicitly indicated diversity among tribes by making comments such as "Some Indians were agriculturists, some hunters, depending on the part of the country."

When describing Indians today, children again generalized, not indicating whether they were referring to all Indian people or to some Indian people. For these children, Indians either live like we do ("They turned into Americans rather than keeping their own ways") or live the same as they did in the past ("They do the same things they did years ago"). Only a few fifth graders expressed some knowledge of diversity among Indian people today. Two exceptionally good answers reflect this broader, less generalized view. In describing where Indian people live, one fifth grader said "Depending on what kind of Indian they are, some live in pueblos, some in housing like ours"; another said an Indian father does "All kinds of different things, sometimes normal jobs, sometimes medicine men, I think that is what they are called. They can do anything they are qualified for. They could be a doctor if they had their degree."

There seems to be a definite need to emphasize the diversity among Indian people, both past and present. Information describing one tribe is easily generalized to all tribes and information about Indians of the past may be assumed to be true of all Indians today. Schools can help to counteract the homogenized view of the Indian by frequently identifying the specific Indian tribe being studied and reiterating that many Indian people do live differently today than they did in the past.

Fifth grade children gave more information than kindergarteners did about Indian people.

Fifth graders consistently gave more information and a wider range of answers to all the questions indicating they had more knowledge and were better able to express themselves. This is particularly evident in a number of areas.

When describing traditional/historical activities of women and children, more fifth graders responded and a few more activities were named such as grinding corn and craft activities. There were still quite a few children who simply said an Indian mother "cooks" or Indian children "play". Compared to the high number of responses in regards to an Indian father's activities, children show less knowledge about the historical activities of women and children.

More fifth graders than kindergarteners gave information about today. In contrast to the large number of students who seemed to be visualizing the Indian of the past a group of fifth graders (approximately 18%) answered most of the questions with information implying they were speaking about Indians today. Very few kindergarteners made this distinction. Almost one-fourth of the fifth graders are aware of reservations. However, some of these children have the misconception that Indians have to stay on a reservation. Others did not specify that Indian people also live in other places besides reservations.

Some fifth graders expressed a sensitivity to the problems of Indian people. A few were aware of prejudice today and 13% of the fifth graders made strong statements that Indians should have more rights or should be treated equally.

Even by fifth grade, many children do not identify positive or negative feelings toward American Indians.

Two interesting observations from this study are (1) the largest group of children at both levels do not commit themselves to either positive or negative feelings toward Indian people, and (2) among those who do express feelings, fifth graders tend to be more positive than kindergarteners.

It is possible, of course, that some of those who were noncommittal when asked how they felt about Indians were simply unwilling to admit their feelings or unable to describe them. For the remainder of this large group, however, the implications for education and the communications media are important; even after the fifth grade, children are forming attitudes toward the American Indian. Care should be taken to choose educational activities which present an accurate picture of Indian heritage and include the many contrtbutions Indians have made and are making.

Among the children who do identify their feelings, fifth graders tend to be more positive than kindergarteners and will more frequently say they'd like to have an Indian for a friend. The reason for this shift is not clear. It may be the influence of schooling between kindergarten and grade five; or it may result from increased familiarity with Indian people through personal contacts and other experiences.

Those kindergarteners who make negative comments about Indian people base them on a different image than do fifth graders. Negative-feeling kindergarteners describe Indians as war-like, "I don't like them because they kill people." Negative feeling fifth graders, on the other hand, describe Indian people as lazy and unlawful, breaking into stores or breaking down houses.

Along with the conclusions from the data, we feel the following inference merits discussion.

Children's images of Indian people suggest the influence of the media.

Kindergarten children were chosen for this study because their answers would reflect the image of the Indian people portrayed by influences outside of the schools. There are a variety of influences on children including the attitudes of parents and family as well as other group experiences. However, one which touches all children is the media, that is, television, movies, storybooks, toys and games. Considering the many references to Indians in the media, it is not surprising that many five-year-olds already have some impressions of the American Indian. That they do is clearly evidenced by the fact that all but 13 of the kindergarten children responded to at least one of the questions on this survey with a comment giving information.

What kind of an image did these kindergarten children portray? They are aware already of the traditionally dressed figure in feathers and skins living by hunting and dwelling in teepees. In fact, 182 children out of 238 (76%) answered at least one of the questions with some aspect of this image. In the case of 43 of these children, the Indian is a hostile enemy with which to contend, a fact that readily brings to mind the cowboys and Indians conflicts so common to movies and cartoons on television.

It is also interesting to note that a significantly larger number of kindergarten children gave answers about the traditional activities of Indian fathers (81) than about Indian mothers (20). It is apparent that the image of the Indian which children have is predominantly male. This, too, strongly suggests the influences of the media and games and toys in which the role of the Indian woman is seldom portrayed.

The primary image reflected by these children brings to mind the portrayal of Indian people in many story books. These books focus primarily on the past and portray a stereotyed image of Indian people. Mary Gloyne Byler, a Cherokee, writes with concern about children's books.[1]

> "There are too many stories for very young children about little boys running around in feathers and headbands, wearing fringed buckskin clothing, moccasins and (especially) carrying little bows and arrows. The majority of these books deal with the unidentified past. The characters are from unidentified tribes and they are often not even afforded the courtesy of personal names. In fact the only thing identifiable is the stereotyped image of the befeathered Indian....The device of repeatedly referring to people in this impersonal and anonymous way, and then reinforcing the anonymity with illustrations that are nondescript, creates the impression that one is not dealing with full-fledged human beings."

[1] Mary Gloyne Byler, American Indian Authors for Young Readers, New York, Association on American Indian Affairs, 1973, p. 5.

Fifth graders are also influenced by books as well as other forms of the media. It is interesting to note that, like the kindergarteners, a majority of the fifth graders responded to some of the questions with information about the Indian of the past even though all of the questions are worded in the present tense.

The media is reflected by a few fifth graders who mention "Wounded Knee."[1] Such present day concerns of Indian people provide good openers for the very necessary emphasis on the Indian of today.

The task of the teacher is a challenging one. Not only does new information have to be given, but the misconceptions and stereotypes about Indian people which bombard the child from outside of the classroom need to be counteracted.

[1]The so-called "Indian occupation of Wounded Knee, South Dakota" had occurred one year earlier (1973) and the trial of two participants, Russell Means and Dennis Banks, had just ended in St. Paul when the survey was taken in the fall of 1974.

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APPENDIX

INSTRUCTION TO INTERVIEWERS

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL INDIAN SURVEY

A. Contacting teachers

1. Call school and ask to have teacher return call at her convenience.

2. When call is returned, give your name and explain that you are a member of the League of Women Voters of New Brighton. Explain that you would like to set up a time convenient to her to conduct the Indian survey.

3. Ask the teacher to have a class roster available on the day you are coming showing students present. Ask that she count Indian students as absent on the interview day.

4. Don't try to explain or justify the survey. If there are any questions ask her to contact Jane Rosell.

B. Interviewing procedure on day of survey

1. Get class roster from teacher. Ask for two chairs for hall.

2. On list of students from appropriate grade number 1, 6, 11, 16, 21, 26, 31.

3. Ask teacher to send students designated by number one at a time to the hall.

C. Interviewing student

1. Put child at ease. Smile, be friendly and unhurried. Use child's first name only.

2. Introductory statement to child

Kindergarten - "I'm trying to learn about American Indians and you can help me. I'm going to write this down so I can remember."

Fifth grade - "I'm trying to learn about American Indians and you can help me. Your name will not be used. This is not a test." If student asks why he was chosen explain you didn't have time to choose everyone and had chosen names by numbers.

D. Recording answers

1. Assign each child a number and be sure that number corresponds to that child's answer for each question.

2. Identify student's number with his grade and school. Do not use his name.

3. Draw a line to designate a different class and continue numbering consecutively.

4. There will be one question on each page. You may use the back of the page if necessary.

5. Ask only questions as stated. If no response is given, write "no response given".

   Allowable clarifications: If child is puzzled about questions do not try to explain or restate except in these cases as follows:

   No. 3 - What does an American Indian look like?

   No. 4 - What does an Indian father do for work?

   No. 5 - What does an Indain mother do for work?

   No. 8 - This could be difficult for kindergarten children. If there is no response to number 8 skip number 9.

E. Completion of interviews

1. Thank the teacher for her cooperation.

2. Give her a list of the questions.

3. Tell her the results of the district-wide survey will be made available to her.

F. Return surveys to captain.